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THE CHURCH IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A THESIS

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We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we have read and recommended to the General Faculty Council for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE CHURCH IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD, submitted by David Richard Edwards, B. A., in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

THE CHURCH IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

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THE CHURCH IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Introduction

"Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God and saying, 'The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel.'" - Mark 1: 14f

The concept of the kingdom of God is of central importance in the teaching of Jesus. The reign of His Father is a perspective through which His whole message may be studied. More, His mission and His very being are closely identified with it. He did not set out to teach a doctrine of the kingdom of God. He came to inaugurate the redemption of God, whereby the whole creation would finally come willingly under God's reign. Specifically, He came to show and tell men that the kingdom of God is the reign of their Father's love, that this reign is surely victorious, and that this kingdom is open to them now.

From the time of Albrecht Ritschl (1822-89), the major continuing theological debate has centred in the concept of the kingdom of God. So great has been the volume of books and papers in this field that I have felt obliged to begin this paper with a survey of some of the major contributions to the debate and some attempt to group their writers according to the basic approach to the question of how the kingdom is related to this present world.

The basic material with which all these scholars must work is the recorded sayings of Jesus about the kingdom. Most have

confined their studies to the first three gospels, and in this I have followed them, relying on a sampling of their opinions to help determine which sayings may reasonably be accepted as authentic.

A study in such a broad and well-examined field naturally opens doors to a number of related topics. Jesus' self-conception and particularly His use of the term "Son of man" is one of these with which I have not attempted to deal. The Bible's concept of time, its "philosophy of history", is another, and to this I have devoted a chapter because the Hebrew time concept is important to Jesus' picture of the nearness of the kingdom. The last part of the paper is its reason for being, a wrestling with the idea that the congregation of Christians is called to live as really in the kingdom and to live with the powers and responsibilities and blessings of the kingdom.

I have come to neither a position nor a conclusion of my own as to the relationship of the church and the kingdom. In part this may be the result of much reading, and in part a natural preference for the middle ground. But it is also an affirmation of the wealth of meaning in this concept of God's kingdom and of the untold ways in which the church shares that wealth.

I

Chapter One: Thorough-going Eschatology.

C. T. Craig analyzes three aspects of the kingdom of God to be its eternal nature, its present manifestation, and the fact⁽¹⁾ that its consummation is still to come. Over and around such statements as this, one of the great theological debates of the modern age has been waged. In the words of Jarald Brauer:

At present theological discussion remains torn between two basic emphases. One stresses the reality of the presence of the kingdom of God transforming this life through judgment and mercy. The kingdom is here as a new reality in life, but it is engaged in a life and death struggle with satanic forces and demonic powers. History is thus a great stage on which the drama of redemption is fought. However, the battle, though desperately real, has been won in the victory of Jesus Christ. . . . The other point of view stresses the kingdom yet to come. Though it is recognized that God rules, for He is sovereign, the demonic forces are so great that nothing but suffering can be anticipated. (2)

The two extremes of position in this discussion may be said to have been set on the one side by C. H. Dodd with his emphasis on "realized eschatology", and on the other side by Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer who developed a "thorough-going eschatology". There are others whose main pronouncements may fairly be grouped with these on one side or the other of the debate; but since extremes of position can be set only once, there has developed a third major "position" lying somewhere between the

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- (1) Quoted by W. M. Horton in "The Kingdom of God and the Church", p. 324 in T. S. Kepler (comp.), Contemporary Thinking About Jesus.
(2) Jarald C. Brauer, "The Kingdom of God" in A Handbook of Christian Theology.

extremes and embodying in varying proportions some insights from each. The lines of thought are not clearly drawn, but this middle ground with its dual emphases on "the kingdom present and still to come" has attracted a growing number of scholars and has led to very fruitful study of the Biblical meaning of time and the relation of the church in the world to the kingdom of God.

We will look first then at the position of the thorough - going eschatologist, bearing in mind that the category, like all categories of thought, is loose enough to include some Biblical scholars some of the time but not all the time, but bearing in mind also that one's position on this basic question influences the direction of his thought in many other areas.

Schweitzer saw Jesus as standing in the tradition of Jewish apocalyptic hope with its conception of two worlds, two aeons, one corrupted by Satan and almost finished, the other controlled by God and ready to break in and be broken into. Jesus was "an imperious ruler" condemning and denying this present world, striving for mastery of the hearts of men that they, by His Spirit, might overcome the world. Schweitzer interpreted every act as well as every word of Jesus as having an essentially eschatological meaning; and in this he went farther than Weiss whose original insight it was that Jesus' message was a warning to quit this world, to loose all holds upon it and to stand ready for the coming of the new age.

This position is taken also by Rudolf Bultmann, who sees the kingdom as wholly supernatural and other-worldly, and Jesus' work

to be that of calling men out of the world, separating them entirely from this world. In no sense can the kingdom be realized on earth. It is "not an ideal which realizes itself in human history; we cannot speak of its founding, its building, its completion; we can only say that it draws near, it comes, it appears. It is (1) supernatural, superhistorical . . .". There is here a strong emphasis on the eternal nature of the kingdom, on the fact that it exists in a totally different and wholly other sphere, and on the idea that to enter the kingdom is to leave this sphere and to enter that other. What we have in the coming of Jesus is the sign that this transfer of existence will soon be open to men. God's reign is not fully here, but it is even now dawning; and so Jesus' preaching is dominated by the awareness of the nearness of the kingdom. "What is new and really His own about it all is the certainty with which He says, 'Now the time is come! God's (2) reign is breaking in! The end is here!'" "All that man can do in the face of the reign of God now breaking in is this: Keep ready or get ready for it. Now is the time of decision and Jesus' (3) call is the call to decision."

This position is one of the grand and awesome outcomes of the Calvinist's concept of God. God's kingdom has nothing to do with the petty strivings and aspirations of His creatures, but is instead a whole new age, a radical in-breaking from out there. Nevertheless it is an interesting aspect of Bultmann's view that he does not see this inbreaking reign of God as making any change in the

(1) Rudolf Bultmann, "The Kingdom of God", p. 302 in Kepler, op. cit.
 (2) Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, Volume I, p. 6
 (3) *ibid.*, p. 9

world into which it breaks, except presumably to destroy it utterly. There is no thought that the incoming kingdom will reform or transform society. The ethic associated with it is not the ethic which it will produce, but the ethic to which a man must subscribe in order to be ready for the kingdom. The ethic is so designed that obedience to it means and conveys entry into the kingdom. "The kingdom of God is deliverance for man, . . . es-
(1)
chatological deliverance which ends everything earthly." So Jesus is seen as repudiating this world and natural man, pointing always away from man to God.

A similar opinion of the nearness of the kingdom is held by Werner Kummel, who sees the days of Jesus' ministry as days of decision, alive with the imminence of the new age. Although He did not announce that the kingdom was present but rather that it had come near, yet "for Jesus the present is linked in an unusual way with the coming eschatological event, giving the present an eschatological stamp; . . . the promise of the coming kingdom of God makes the present appear already decisive as an
(2)
eschatological present." Kummel is concerned with Jesus' sense of the shortness of the present time of decision, and lays stress on Jesus' evident belief that the eschaton would come within the earthly lifetime of some of His hearers. He is also aware of those passages in which Jesus seems to speak of the kingdom as a reality present on earth, and finds in these evidence of what may be a

(1) Rudolf Bultmann, "The Kingdom of God", p. 301 in Kepler, op. cit.

(2) Werner Georg Kummel, Promise and Fulfillment, p. 48

developing belief in Jesus' mind that the kingdom had come with His own coming. "Jesus saw this future eschatological consummation to be effective already in the present in that the eschaton showed itself effective in His own person."⁽¹⁾ This may be seen, for instance, in His victory over demons and His acts of healing. For other men even the entry into the kingdom was a future thing, but He Himself came not only as the announcer of the kingdom but as the earnest of its coming. "Jesus saw the kingdom of God to be present before the parousia, which He thought to be imminent, only in His own person and works; He knew no other realization of the eschatological consummation."⁽²⁾ Nevertheless within this limitation we must take seriously His declaration both of the imminent future and of the real presence of the kingdom of God.

Where others would place the existence of the kingdom in a different plane of time as well as of being, Kummel insists that we cannot dismiss Jesus' own time concepts as irrelevant, and he would definitely place these within history. "For Jesus the future as an actual happening in time was something essential. . . . He sees God's action toward men being accomplished purely and simply in the context of history proceeding from the creation to the redemption in the last days. . . . Jesus meant the eschatological prediction to be understood as something real in the future and that Jesus considered His own appearance to be an event in time."⁽³⁾

(1) Kummel, op. cit., p. 105

(2) ibid., p. 140

(3) ibid., p. 146f

Ethelbert Stauffer, while still holding to the essential position of thorough - going eschatology, adds a significant insight as he considers to what extent the kingdom may be thought of as a present reality. "The pre-Christian era is one of promise," he says; "the time of Jesus is a time of prophetic fulfillment; the age to come will be the age of fulfillment."⁽¹⁾

By "prophetic fulfillment" he would seem to imply that the kingdom is come in the eyes of God, although this does not make any real-life difference to men on earth. Death, affliction and sin are not conquered. The conflict is rather intensified since the coming of Christ. Nevertheless the Old Testament promises of deliverance have been fulfilled in Him and the man in Christ is a new creature: not new existentially but new in God's eyes. "The man who is cleansed remains unchanged in his essential nature but he is clean forensically. . . . Death, anguish and sin still rule in the world. But the question about the standing of sinful man before God, the question about guilt, that is solved, solved⁽²⁾ by God's mighty act on the cross." And of course the knowledge of this does make a "real-life difference to men on earth", not in the conditions of their existence but in terms of a new relationship with God and with the devil. Christ's coming has created a new situation, a new condition for life, which is "seen now in the life of the church and will reach its climax and its

(1) Ethelbert Stauffer, New Testament Theology, p. 79

(2) *ibid.*, pp. 141f

(1)
conclusion in the end of history." In this personal and unseen sense Christ's earthly kingdom has dawned, the blow has been struck which shall destroy the enemy, and we live now in the time of waiting for the fulfillment of these things.

Sigmund Mowinckel has arrived at a rather similar position through his study of Jesus' use of the term "Son of man" in referring to Himself and His rejection of the term "Messiah". The Messiah was a this-worldly figure in Jewish thought, whose kingdom found its fulfillment in social and political restoration. It was sometimes held that this kingdom would be an interim one, to be succeeded at the eschaton by the kingdom of God. This was what Jesus' disciples expected of Him. But He saw His kingdom as that of the Son of man, other-worldly, divine and associated with the eschaton. The Son of man was to appear at the end of the age, when his work would be to manifest the righteousness of God by saving the righteous and condemning the wicked. "It is a new world of another kind which is made real when the kingdom of the Son of man is revealed. . . . That God alone should have the glory forever is the sum of the mission of the Son of man." (2) The powers of that kingdom were already at work in Jesus, but His mission was primarily one of announcing the coming of the eschaton and the in-breaking of His kingdom.

It is interesting to set alongside this the conclusion of Walter Bundy that Jesus' followers claimed for Him what He never

(1) Stauffer, op. cit., p. 152

(2) Sigmund Mowinckel, He That Cometh, pp. 406f

claimed for Himself, including not only the title of Messiah but also that of Son of man. "Jesus Himself believed in this Son of man and his coming, and He spoke of both in the objective manner. . . . It is however inconceivable that Jesus could ever have identified Himself with this Son of man and thus have made a myth of His own person." Bundy is thus perhaps the most thorough -⁽¹⁾ going eschatologist of them all, since he would deny that anything remotely connected with the kingdom became operative in any sense with the coming of Jesus. His work was simply the prophet's proclamation of the certainty of the end. "The religious outlook of Jesus was definitely prophetic and eschatological. He looked forward to a great cosmic convulsion that would culminate in the⁽²⁾ establishment of the new order, the kingdom of God."

We may conclude this look at the first of the three general groupings of position on the kingdom's relationship to the world with a consideration of how Edwyn Bevan arrives at the same "futurist" opinion by simply facing logical conclusions. The very existence of the concept of a kingdom of God, he says, implies that God's will is not done on earth by men. In face of the fact that the kingdom is not present on earth today to any significantly greater extent than it was nineteen hundred years ago, we must insist that the kingdom is primarily future and eschatological. What is required in the kingdom is a correspondence of man's will with God's, and this will not happen on earth. It demands a new

(1) Walter E. Bundy, Jesus and the First Three Gospels, p. 467

(2) *ibid.*, p. 457

creation. The coming of the kingdom "implies that the whole earthly order of things, the physical world as we know it, comes to an end or is left behind. . . . (It) is only a platform which each generation crosses obliquely from birth to the entrance" ⁽¹⁾ into the kingdom.

Even Bevan, who seems to have left no room for the will of God to be done on earth, finds that he must qualify his position in recognition of God's hand in history and especially in the church. But like the others considered here, his major stress falls on the future fulfillment of promise, the coming manifestation of that which has been proclaimed, the revelation in the new age of that which has been hinted in the old. One strength of the position is surely its realism: it takes honest account of man's failure to be what he was made to be. If it is assailable on the grounds of bad psychology (which is surely bad theology) and of a rather off-handed dismissal of many good things that have happened on earth, it has at least lifted our thoughts to God and bid us rest our hopes in Him. It offers one sound interpretation of the message of Jesus.

(1) Edwyn Bevan in Wood et al, The Kingdom of God and History, p. 69

Chapter Two: Realized Eschatology.

C. H. Dodd is the first and representative exponent of the second major position on this question, a position named from its central insight "realized eschatology". It is important here to recognize that the eschaton does not refer so much to the end point in time of this present age as to the fulfillment of its purpose, the achievement of the goal which God has for it. History is moving toward a fore-ordained purpose, and Dodd has stressed those aspects of the purpose which were fulfilled in the coming of Jesus.

"The Age to Come, in Jewish and primitive Christian thought, is not simply another period of history lying as yet in the future, but an order of being essentially superior to the present order, which will enter into human experience when this order ends. . . . Salvation for man does not consist in turning away from the historical order and entering here and now into the eternal and ideal world. He must wait in expectancy for the final act of God by which the historical process will be wound up and the life of the age to come laid open to those whom He has chosen." (1) The New Testament makes one change in this Jewish belief, in its assertion that the age to come has come in Christ. "Whereas Jewish eschatology looked to the close of the historical process as the necessary fulfillment upon which the meaning of history depends, Christianity found the fulfillment of history in an actual series of events within history." (2) Since the two ages are not made of the same

(1) C. H. Dodd in Wood et al, The Kingdom of God and History, p. 23

(2) *ibid.*

stuff, are not qualitatively alike, there is no reason why they cannot exist side by side, or one within the other. Chronological time is a real and necessary category within this present age, but the age to come has an eternal character which makes measured time irrelevant to it. This present age, earth's history, can go on, and will go on, and will have an ending; "but meanwhile the true eschaton . . . has become an object of experience."⁽¹⁾ Whatever else comes to pass in the experience of men, its real meaning has been revealed in Christ. From now on, history can do no other than reveal the meaning already given to it, and when it ends, when the apocalypse comes, it will be at the return of the Lord who has already come. This is the New Testament insight, that eschaton and apocalypse can be separated in time, and more, that the eschaton, the fulfillment of purpose, can come within the course of history. "The gospel declares that within history an event happened in which the whole purpose of God is fulfilled. . . . There is in history something other than movement towards a goal which will be the end of history."⁽²⁾ This does not mean that God has moved His sphere of action from the old age into the new. The remaining days of the old age are not thereby abandoned as being empty of meaning. God still works in and through history, for the new age is the meaningful completion of the old. But when the old age ends, at the Second Coming, there will not be anything qualitatively new, but only a quantitatively fuller pronouncement

(1) C. H. Dodd, op. cit., p. 24

(2) ibid., p. 25

of God's existing reign. "There will be an end when the church, or redeemed humanity, has grown into the stature of the fulness of Christ. But there will be nothing in the end which is not already given implicitly to the church. Christ has already conquered the powers of evil, and in Him men already have access to the glorious and immortal life of the eternal order."⁽¹⁾

Dodd found in the parables of Jesus his major support for the contention that "it was Jesus Himself who first interpreted His own ministry, death and resurrection as the breaking-in of the kingdom of God."⁽²⁾ In the same passage he admits that "the teaching has a paradoxical character, sometimes suggesting that the kingdom of God is yet to come and sometimes that it is already here. . . . (But) it seems clear that the main purport of the whole is that the eschatological hope is now fulfilled."

What Dodd found is that there is something new in Jesus' use of the phrase "kingdom of God", something essentially different from the contemporary Jewish usage. There would be nothing very startling in a proclamation that men could accept the reign of God in their lives here and now, with a view to enjoying the blessings of that reign at the close of this present age. But Jesus has more than this in mind when He says, "The kingdom of God has come upon you." He is saying that there is a new reality now operative on earth, that the kingdom confronts men no longer as a free choice with future consequences, but in present power.

(1) C. H. Dodd, op. cit., p. 28

(2) ibid., p. 33

"The sovereign power of God has come into effective operation. It is not a matter of having God for your king in the sense that you obey His commandments: it is a matter of being confronted with the power of God at work in the world. In other words the 'eschatological' kingdom of God is proclaimed as a present fact which men must recognize, whether by their actions they accept or reject it.⁽¹⁾" The kingdom has come as an historical occurrence independent of the attitude of men. It has come in the ministry of Jesus, and the signs of its presence are His acts of sovereignty over the powers of evil: "The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up." "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you."

Another new concept in Jesus' eschatological teaching, and one which makes it much easier to believe that the kingdom has come in its fulness on earth, is His clear association of suffering, disaster and self-denial with membership in it. It is true that at this point we must also recognize those elements of His teaching which posit a future state of bliss and reward, but in stating so sternly the woes of the disciple right on the membership application, Jesus is closing the door to any speculation that men would recognize the real coming of the kingdom by the sudden silencing of their quarrels. "He gave no promise that the future would bring with it any such perfection of human society

(1) C. H. Dodd, The Parables of the Kingdom, p. 44

as some Jewish thinkers had predicted under the form of a restored kingdom of David. He declared that the kingdom of God had come. When He spoke of it in terms of the future, His words suggest not any readjustment of conditions on this earth, but the glories of
(1)
a world beyond this."

The coming of the kingdom is intimately associated with the coming of Jesus, and one's interpretation of the sense in which it is really present is largely influenced by his position on the self-conception of Jesus, and particularly on His use of the term "Son of man". For Dodd this is an apocalyptic term, its content well enough established in Jewish thinking that it can only be associated with the coming of the new age at the close of the present age. Jesus deliberately applied this eschatological concept to Himself on earth in time; and in the same sense the eternal kingdom has come. Not only has the kingdom come in the ministry of Jesus, but in His suffering and death it becomes the property of all. It is a timeless reality actually conveyed to finite creatures via the cross. In the ministry, death and resurrection of Christ, "history becomes the field within which God confronted men in a decisive way. . . . God comes to meet us in history and
(2)
sets before us the open but narrow door into His kingdom."

Much of Jesus' own teaching about the kingdom is embodied in parables, and as has been already noted, it was to these that Dodd turned for support of his thesis that "the kingdom of God in

(1) C. H. Dodd, op. cit., p 74

(2) ibid., pp. 208f

its full reality is not something which will happen after other things have happened. It is that to which men awake when this order of time and space no longer limits their vision.⁽¹⁾ He considered the parables in two main groupings, the parables of crisis and the parables of growth. In the former he noted that "support is most commonly sought and found for the view, which I believe to be mistaken, that Jesus foretold a period of waiting between His death and resurrection and His coming in glory."⁽²⁾ Rather, these prepare-for-the-crisis parables speak of a present crisis and of the need, not of preparation for an event that was coming, but of alertness to an event that was even then taking place. The eschatological parables are parables of present judgment by which Christ appealed to men to see that the kingdom was present in all its momentous consequences. Similarly the parables of growth are misinterpreted if they are thought to show that the kingdom is present in the world only in germ, and to allow for an indefinite period of growth before it is fully present. These parables do not refer to a present sowing and a future growth but to a past sowing, a past growth, and a present condition of being ripe for the harvest. The kingdom has grown and is now accomplished, complete. The present crisis has been a long time in the making but it is fully here now.

Dodd found in the apostolic church a logical development of Jesus' own teaching about the kingdom, for the church at first

(1) C. H. Dodd, *op. cit.*, p. 108

(2) *ibid.*, p. 154

misinterpreted the teaching and expected a speedy advent of Christ in power, then gradually adjusted to the delay, re-examined the teaching and realized the truth of the kingdom's presence in power. This realization is the basis of Paul's "Christ - mysticism": the kingdom was manifest in power in Christ, and Christ is present in power in the church. So the community of believers, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is the kingdom of God. Paul came to believe "that this life in the Spirit marked the church as being the true Israel of God in its final eschatological manifestation; . . . (and that) all that prophecy and apocalypse had asserted of the supernatural messianic community was fulfilled in the church. . . . The hope of glory yet to come remains as a background of thought, but the foreground is more and more occupied by the contemplation of all the riches of divine grace enjoyed here and now by those who are in Christ Jesus. . . . This was the true solution of the problem presented to the church by the disappointment of its naive expectation that the Lord would immediately appear: not the restless and impatient straining after signs of His coming . . . but a fuller realization of all the heights and depths of the supernatural life here and now." Paul had still to leave room for a belief in Christ's second coming with the accompanying end of this mortal existence; but he came to see that the coming of Christ within history had both foreshadowed and overshadowed His coming at the end of history.

(1) C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development, pp. 140ff

The most obvious difficulty facing the proponent of realized eschatology is what to do with the New Testament expectation of Christ's imminent return. Not all writers handle this as gently as has Dodd. Glasson, for example, declares that all the church's expectation was plainly and simply wrong, falsely developed under the influence of contemporary Jewish thinking about the Day of the Lord and the anti-Christ. "Jesus taught that the long-expected kingdom of God had dawned. (The church) felt that what they had already witnessed surely could not be the whole story of the (1) divine intervention." So the church was led by despair over contemporary events and hope for a better world into an intense, excited waiting for Christ's immediate return, whereas Jesus expected nothing of the kind and in fact taught that history and daily life would go on indefinitely.

The early expectation of the parousia can also be dismissed simply on the grounds of the nineteen century long delay. The kingdom, says Roy Miller, "must be realized in as large a measure as possible within human history. Its slow progress is definitely related to the fact that it is to be achieved not by force but by (2) the laborious and uncertain way of preaching and teaching."

Many followers of Dodd's essential position on the realization of the kingdom on earth have leaned heavily on the thought that it is fully realized in the person and ministry of Jesus; and it is with some of these that we begin to edge toward the

(1) T. F. Glasson, The Second Advent, p. 194

(2) Roy D. Miller, "The Kingdom of God", p. 14

middle ground between thorough-going and realized eschatology. These are the writers who stress the personal, individual aspect of the kingdom of God as the reign of the Father in the hearts of men. So Cadoux sees Jesus calling men to obedience to the will of God and to personal response to the love of God; and wherever this call is heard, there is the kingdom. Jesus saw the kingdom as already present on earth in His own person and work, and He looked for its growth and final consummation to take place also on earth as His disciples extended the acknowledged reign of God throughout the world and as their proclamation of the good news was accompanied by signs of God's power. As for a parousia, a return of Christ in power, this was definitely expected and proclaimed by Him, but was equated in His own mind with His resurrection. "All Jesus' predictions of His resurrection after three days were⁽¹⁾ in reality intended to be predictions of His parousia." Thus there is nothing more to be expected from God by way of manifesting His reign: we have it all, and must proclaim this.

The realization of the kingdom on earth becomes focussed quite sharply in the person of Christ in the thought of Whale, who sees Jesus as "more than a prophet, more than a witness to God's redeeming activity; He is the full and final expression of that activity, . . . God's very agent and representative in bringing the kingdom, . . . the lonely embodiment of its judgment and redemption as He hung on the cross."; and of Dmitri Merejkowski, who

(1) Cecil John Cadoux, The Historic Mission of Jesus, p. 297
(2) John S. Whale, "The Christian Doctrine of History", p. 205
in Kepler (comp.), Contemporary Thinking About Jesus.

wrote:

Slowly and solemnly rose the invisible sun over the world - the great luminary of the End. Mankind felt it vaguely, as a blind man feels the warmth of the rising sun. It was seen by only one people - Israel. Of all Israel, it was most plainly seen by those who followed Jesus, the Galilean crowds. Still plainer, by the hundreds who heard Him on the Mount of the Beatitudes. But the full light of the End illumined only one man on earth - Jesus Himself. (1)

It is with T. W. Manson that we find the door definitely opened to the joining of insights into a view of the kingdom as really present and yet still to come, although it must be noted that his emphasis is still on the present actualization. He notes that in the early part of His ministry, Jesus speaks of the kingdom as something which is coming, but that after Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ", He begins to speak of it as something which men can enter. It would seem from this that He saw the kingdom as coming in some real sense during His own ministry, in fact at the moment when Peter recognized the reigning power of God in the person of Jesus. "With that recognition, the (2) kingdom could be said to have come." The eternal reign of God is manifest on earth in the people who recognize and acknowledge His sovereignty; it grows on earth as this recognition grows. Christ is the king of the earthly manifestation of the kingdom, and will reign until all His earthly foes are defeated, at which time He will hand over His earthly sovereignty to the Father and the kingdom on earth will be swallowed up in the eternal reign of God. This is the parousia, which does not bring anything new into the

(1) Dmitri Merejkowski, "The Liberator", p. 366 in Kepler (comp.), op. cit.

(2) T. W. Manson, The Teaching of Jesus, p. 130

picture but is simply the last milestone in the earthly growth of the kingdom. In a sense this view makes historic time irrelevant to the kingdom except as a framework in which the earthly manifestation of the kingdom grows: "The kingdom of God in its essence is the reign of God, a personal relation between God and the individual; and there is no point in asking whether it is present or future, just as there is no point in asking whether the Fatherhood of God is present or future. It is something independent of temporal and spatial relations. It is a standing claim made by God on the loyalty and obedience of man. From time to time individuals admit this claim and accept the sovereignty of God. This is what is meant by the phrase 'Receive the kingdom of God'.⁽¹⁾"

For both Dodd and Schweitzer, the question of the kingdom's relationship to the here and now was central. Manson, in attempting to get outside or beyond the concept of measured time and space, is paving the way to a combining of insights from each of the other positions.

(1) T. W. Manson, op. cit., p. 135

Chapter Three: The Kingdom Present and Yet to Come.

As we turn to the third, "middle ground" category of thought, it is to be noted again that the lines of division between the categories are by no means distinct and that many insights and emphases are shared by scholars who yet differ on where they would place the major stress. Thus even Dodd takes exception to the description "realized eschatology" as applied to his position, preferring the phrase "eschatology in process of being realized", after Jeremias, or possibly, after Florovsky, "inaugurated eschatology". Thus too when we examine the writings of men like Tillich and Cullman, we find it difficult to assign them a place on one side or the other of the discussion.

For purposes of getting on with it, however, we may consider Tillich as the first of those who hold that the kingdom has come and is yet to come, for Tillich sees the kingdom as a symbol of the relationship between ultimate meaning and actual existence, and he declares that the meaning of history both transcends and is contained in history. History is a battlefield of the divine and the demonic; the kingdom is the assertion that God will triumph. "It is not completed but always becoming; not present, neither immanently nor transcendently, but always 'at hand'.⁽¹⁾" The moment of the inbreaking, the drawing near, the becoming "at hand" of this ultimate meaning, this fulfillment of the purpose of history, came with Christ. His coming marked "the fulfillment of the period

(1) Paul Tillich in Wood et al, The Kingdom of God and History, p. 117

of expectation or preparation and the beginning of the period of reception or fragmentary actualization.⁽¹⁾ What the kingdom conveys to man is salvation, the realization of the meaning of existence in the face of destructive powers which defy its meaning. The process of salvation goes on in history by the victories of Christ over particular demons and beyond history in the resurrection of the body (Tillich attaches special significance to the use of the word "body" in a social sense, since salvation applies not only to individuals but to groups and institutions, not only to mankind but to all of creation), and in the coming of the new heaven and the new earth.

Reinhold Niebuhr sets forth most clearly and concisely the middle position on the kingdom, and he sees this as Jesus' own deliberate reinterpretation of the popular eschatology which surrounded Him. "Prophetic and apocalyptic hopes anticipated an end which would both disclose and establish the sovereignty of God; which would both reveal the meaning of life and fulfill it. In Jesus' own reinterpretation, these two facets of history's culmination are, at least partially, separated."⁽²⁾ Thus the kingdom has come in the one sense, of disclosing God's reign, but not in the other, of establishing it. Jesus comes first as the suffering Servant, revealing the sovereignty of God and the meaning of life; but He will come again as the Son of man with power to establish and fulfill what He has now made known. In the first

(1) Paul Tillich, op. cit., p. 119

(2) Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, Vol. II, p. 47

coming there is a victory over evil, but it is not ultimate victory. "Sin is overcome in principle but not in fact. Love must continue to be suffering love rather than triumphant love." ⁽¹⁾ So Niebuhr sees history as an interim between the first and second comings, between the disclosure of its own true meaning and the actualization of that meaning. But the interim is neither temporal nor spatial, it is not a waiting period, nor is it a stage on which the drama of actualization is played out. The eschaton, the fulfillment of meaning, is near to history at every point, impinging on it and opening out from it. The actualization of the revealed sovereignty of God will not come in a certain year of earth's history, but with a certain relationship between man and God. Without God, man's history is moving toward dissolution and death, toward the end as finis; by the power of God it moves toward the end as telos, which is its fulfillment, the realization of its goal. It is as man comes into a right relationship with God that he exchanges the end finis for the end telos.

This view of the kingdom as both a present and a future reality builds much upon the opinion that the age to come will be a fulfillment and not an abridgement of this present age. The kingdom comes not simply in judgment upon what is evil in this world but also as the completion and fruition of some processes already at work in man's social and historical existence. So for example Amos Wilder points out that the early Christians would not have

(1) Reinhold Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 49

spoken of God invading history or of His kingdom breaking in on man, because for them the movement was in the other direction: history was moving toward the kingdom, and this aeon would be taken up into the eternal one. Wilder associates this world-view with that of the Judaism of the time of Jesus, in which history was seen not as a circle or a line but as a "U" shape, with a fall and a rise, a time of being lost and a time of being found, and, of the greatest importance, a goal in terms of which it had proceeded from its divine origin. Man had moved away from God and His purpose, but was now moving toward Him. It is this movement toward God, together with God's initiative in the process, which Wilder equates with the coming of the kingdom of God. In describing the New Testament teaching about the nearness of the kingdom, he uses phrases like "already in course -- already making its power felt -- a case of eviction (of evil) well under way -- already dawning -- its signs already manifest -- within reach -- under way and moving toward its climax -- arriving". He speaks of Jesus' consciousness of "the presence of the promised eschatological times (and His) anticipation of the culminating features of those times."⁽¹⁾ He insists that Jesus did not think of the kingdom in terms of a mystical kingdom in the soul of the individual, nor of a slowly developing movement in history, nor of the church as the sphere of God's rule. For Wilder the most distinctive characteristic of Jesus' eschatology is His absolute certainty of the sovereignty of God;

(1) Amos N. Wilder, Eschatology and Ethics in the Teaching of Jesus
p. 194

in terms of the "U" shape of history, His conviction that the creation was entering upon the last upward journey. He calls the kingdom proclamation a prophetic forecast, but emphasizes that it was and is directed to the present moment, lived out in social and historical relationships, even though culminating beyond history. The Christian message has added to the Jewish hope of a new social order its own distinctive resurrection hope and eternal hope, while maintaining still the social hope. "It is . . . rightly insisted that Christian social action in history bears abiding fruits. . . . The history of the world will not be swept aside as irrelevant or meaningless at the consummation." ⁽¹⁾ Jesus' eschatology may thus be seen in both social and personal terms, and it may be said without too much artificial dividing of His message that in His social eschatology He speaks of the kingdom as this-worldly and looks for a divine inbreaking of the power of God into human affairs, while in His personal eschatology He speaks more often of the individual's resurrection life, which is an other-worldly state and which will be entered upon after a climactic ending of this present world. He is filled with a sense of the imminence in time of all these eschatological processes and events, and sees His task as that of helping men to recognize and participate in this sudden God-ward swing of events and to prepare themselves for life under new lordship in this world and the next.

Another who stresses the certainty and authority in Jesus'

(1) Amos N. Wilder, New Testament Faith for Today, p. 103

proclamation of the kingdom is Floyd Filson. Jesus' call to men, he says, is based on His knowledge that God has begun to fulfill His promises, and has given assurance that all will be fulfilled. The kingdom is a new realm in which men can live now. In defining the sense in which God's effective rule has begun in the world, Filson uses the phrase "decisive fulfillment": "In the work of the crucified and risen Christ, the fulfillment has already begun. It is not merely a vivid hope: in essence and in large part the gift has already been received.⁽¹⁾" Further, the gift is more than a saving of individuals out of the world, more than a promise of personal immortality. It is the assurance that God will overcome all opposition and that His reign will be acknowledged by the whole creation.

Filson sees this final consummation of the purpose of God as clearly associated with the second coming of Christ; in this he differs with the view of "inaugurated eschatology" advanced by J. A. T. Robinson. Robinson places the parousia or return of Christ in glory at the centre of the New Testament hope, but questions whether Jesus Himself taught His disciples to expect it. Jesus did teach the certainty of the final consummation of God's purpose, embracing in His expectation many of the traditional Jewish concepts associated with the parousia such as the Day of the Lord, the last judgment, the ingathering of the elect and the end of the world; and He undoubtedly associated Himself with this consum-

(1) Floyd V. Filson, Jesus Christ the Risen Lord, p. 43

mation in a unique and personal way. But He saw Himself only at the beginning of the process, not at its end. What the church took to refer to a future second advent, Jesus was applying directly to the present crisis. The church expected the parousia along with the eschaton, but for Jesus eschatology was fully inaugurated in His historic mission. "There is but one Coming, begun at Christmas, perfected on the cross, and continuing till all are included in
(1)
it."

A contrasting view of the relation of the kingdom and the world is that of H. D. Wendland, who attempts to move away from the concept of the kingdom as a separate sphere of life having its existence independant of the earth. Rather, the kingdom is nothing more or less than God's sovereignty on earth, with no existence apart from the people who acknowledge it. God works in the world to guide secular history toward the goal of "sacred history" and the consummation of His purpose for all things. Sacred history results when men are reached with the gospel of salvation and called out of their involvement with this temporal world. This can never result in the full actualization of the kingdom of God, because His sovereignty remains hidden by sin and death, which exist as invaders into His creation; but it does mean partial realization. This development of sacred history resulting from the saving action of God is the only sense in which the kingdom can be realized on earth. Jesus is the Mediator of this saving action, the One by whose

(1) John A. T. Robinson, Jesus and His Coming, p. 185

coming God's kingdom begins to appear in history. Wendland associates the Lordship of Jesus with His resurrection from the dead, for it is only here that God's sovereignty even over death is revealed.

Two further exponents of the view of the kingdom as present and yet to come may be mentioned for the way in which they express the position. G. R. Beasley-Murray says, "The sovereignty of God is revealed in this era in the exercise of judgment and in the power of the gospel; the end time will reveal the consummation of that sovereignty in the victorious manifestation of the Messiah with His glorified community."⁽¹⁾ Sherman Johnson, while giving his opinion that Jesus spoke most often of the kingdom in future rather than in present terms, still says, "The first signs of its operation are visible. . . . When Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God,⁽²⁾ it is not to say what man should do but what God is doing."

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It may be well to conclude this survey of opinion about the kingdom with a look at the view of H. A. Guy, who provides what seems a thorough general compilation of New Testament eschatology and then sets it all in proportion by saying that it is, in one sense, irrelevant to the gospel message. Jesus' eschatology, he feels, may be considered under five aspects: the teaching that the kingdom is present wherever men obey God's will; the proclamation

(1) G. R. Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Future, p. 179

(2) Sherman E. Johnson, Jesus In His Homeland, p. 122

that the kingdom is coming, is at hand and within grasp but not yet present in power; the teaching about life after death in the coming age; the warning that the Day of the Son of man is to be expected soon; and various other components of current Jewish eschatology. All of this eschatology is employed by Jesus not for its own sake but mostly for the sake of moral and spiritual instruction. "Jesus' motive throughout is practical and ethical. Men are to watch, to be faithful in their service, and not to give way to carelessness and indulgence. They will then best fulfill their task in this present age and be ready for the crisis when it comes."⁽¹⁾ Jesus simply uses the concepts and thought-forms of eschatology for other purposes; and "while it is true in one sense to say that eschatology forms the essence of the Christian faith, it is also a fact that no eschatological belief is held to be essential for the Christian outlook."⁽²⁾

(1) H. A. Guy, The New Testament Doctrine of the Last Things, p. 65

(2) *ibid.*, p. 179

II

Chapter Four: What Jesus Meant by the Term "Kingdom of God".

A major part of the teaching of Jesus as recorded in the synoptic gospels is concerned with the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. We will here consider that these terms are identical in the intention of His teaching. We have already had intimations of great differences of opinion on the interpretation of these kingdom sayings, on their relative importance, and even on their authenticity as sayings of Jesus.

On the assumption that any representative group of New Testament critics will agree on the authenticity of a representative group of kingdom sayings, we will here be concerned with a group of forty-four teachings of Jesus about the kingdom, as found in the synoptic gospels, which are commonly accepted as being undeniably His own without embellishment by the writers or later interpretation by the church. (1) From this assortment of proclamation, parable and reply, we will set forth six characteristics of the kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus.

1. The kingdom of God centres in the person of Jesus Christ and is operative in His personal victory over Satan. Here we must make the further assumption, which seems reasonable, that Jesus used the term "Son of man" to refer to Himself; if so there is a clear association in His teaching between Himself and the king-

(1) The main source of the "value judgments" on which this section is based is W. E. Bundy, Jesus and the First Three Gospels. The forty-four kingdom sayings used will be found in the Appendix.

dom. "As Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so shall the Son of man be to this generation." ⁽¹⁾ The sign is almost surely that of the nearness and the working of God. To the disciples after the resurrection, Jesus said, "I appoint to you a kingdom, even as my Father ⁽²⁾ appointed to me", and again the kingdom is that over which God reigns. Some weight may also be attached to Jesus' acceptance of the tribute of the people of Jerusalem: "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom that comes, the ⁽³⁾ kingdom of our father David." His association of the coming of the kingdom with His own works of victory over evil may be seen in the reply to those who accused Him of casting out demons by the power of the prince of demons: "No one can enter into the house of the strong man and spoil his goods except he first bind the strong ⁽⁴⁾ man." Neither here nor in such a story as the one about the nobleman who returned home from a far country to divide his rule among ⁽⁵⁾ his loyal subjects and to punish the disloyal does Jesus ever say, "I am the man"; but there is a large body of this kind of teaching which has neither point nor coherence on any other assumption than that He is taking the powers of the kingdom as His own.

2. There is a basic conflict between the kingdom of God and the world. The kingdom stands in judgment on the world, it condemns sin and unfruitfulness, it calls men to a new way of life. This is most clearly seen in the fundamental call to repentance which is always associated with Jesus' first proclamation of the coming of

(1) Luke 11: 30
 (3) Mark 11: 9, 10
 (5) Luke 19: 11 - 27

(2) Luke 22: 29
 (4) Mark 3: 27

the kingdom; in His sending out the disciples with authority to cast out demons; and in His insistence that the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was not of a high enough calibre for those who would enter the kingdom. Jesus gave many warnings to those whose standards of righteousness were the standards of this world; and again in replying to those who accused Him of employing Satan's power, He made clear the fundamental conflict between His own work and the works of darkness, and at the same time stressed the connection between His work and the kingdom: "If I by the Spirit cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you."⁽¹⁾ Many of the parables of the kingdom, notably those of the drag-net and of the unforgiving debtor end with scenes of judgment, and in His instructions to the disciples Jesus made clear that one basis for the final judgment on the Day of the Lord would be the acceptance or rejection of the kingdom as proclaimed by them. The standards of the kingdom are exclusive and they are high: "Not everyone that says to me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that does the will of my Father who is in heaven."⁽²⁾

3. Associated with these high standards is the demand that the kingdom be given total loyalty, first place in a man's affections. The command is clear: "Seek first His kingdom and its righteousness."⁽³⁾ In parables, the kingdom is likened to treasure, and to a precious pearl, possession of which is worth the loss of all

(1) Matthew 12: 28

(2) Matthew 7: 21

(3) Matthew 6: 33

else. It is to take precedence also over the most sacred personal relationships and obligations: "Leave the dead to bury their own⁽¹⁾ dead; but go and publish abroad the kingdom of God."

4. The power of God is associated with the kingdom, especially in that it brings healing power to the needy and has in it the inherent power of growth. Its coming is not related to our human powers. In the synagogue at Nazareth Jesus proclaimed the fulfilling of the prophecy of Isaiah of "release to the captives, . . . re-⁽²⁾covering of sight to the blind, . . . liberty to the oppressed"; and in the beatitudes, perhaps most pointedly for our purpose in the saying, "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of⁽³⁾ God", He made clear that the power of the kingdom was a divine power, uplifting the fallen. If His works may be taken as kingdom acts, as His teachings are taken as kingdom sayings, then the healing and reviving power of the kingdom is very clear. Again in the parables Jesus taught the inherent growing power in the kingdom relationship. It is like a seed growing secretly, from a tiny beginning toward an unlimited greatness. It is like yeast, permeating the world. If it is a power worth the strong man's seizing, it is also quite within the grasp of the child and of the sick.

5. The kingdom must be proclaimed by those who know about it to those who do not know. It is to be spread abroad by word and shown forth by deed. Again the instructions to the disciples are clear

(1) Luke 9: 60
(3) Luke 6: 20

(2) Luke 4: 18 - 20

on this point, and contain at times a note of urgency, as in the calls to discipleship and the command to pray for labourers in the harvest. Some time might be spent in considering the extent to which Jesus thought of His mission as exclusively to the Jewish nation; but in all it seems clear that He was filled with a sense of the magnitude of His task and of the need for loyal followers to preach the good news of the kingdom.

6. The kingdom of God is related to a coming climactic event, an ultimate conquest of evil, perhaps associated with a second advent. Here we may note the words of the prayer that He taught:
(1)
"The kingdom come"; and His words to the high priest: "Henceforth you shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of
(2)
power and coming on the clouds of heaven." We have also His frequent warnings to the disciples to be ready, "for in an hour that
(3)
you think not, the Son of man comes." It is perhaps legitimate to read the same thought into His conversation with James and John over who should sit at His right hand and at His left in His glory, wherein He speaks definitely of a time which is to come.

(1) Matthew 6: 10
(3) Luke 12: 40

(2) Matthew 26: 64

III

Chapter Five: The Biblical Concept of Time.

The definitive statement on the time concepts of the Bible seems to be that of John Marsh, who points out first that "through-⁽¹⁾ out the Bible the word 'time' is used realistically", not chronologically. That is, a time is known by its content, by what did or can happen in it; and the fulfillment of the potential of a time depends on man seizing the opportunity offered by it. Thus "to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose⁽²⁾ under heaven." And there is no time which does not have a purpose, a potential to be fulfilled. It is God who provides these opportunities in time. "History is not just an aggregate of happenings, but a series of times-with-contents sent by God for His own purposes and demanding appropriate responses from the chosen⁽³⁾ people."

The two most significant or meaning-laden times are the time of God's making of His people at the exodus, and the promised time of His remaking of them at the eschaton or last time. In the New Testament we find the conviction that this second time has arrived: "The time is fulfilled." The Biblical concept of time is one of promise and fulfillment, rather than one of progress or evolution or the succession of events; so that the time of Christ becomes the basic time, in which all the promises are fulfilled. This time

(1) John Marsh, "Time", p. 258 in Alan Richardson (ed.), A Theological Word Book of the Bible.

(2) Ecclesiastes 3: 1

(3) John Marsh, op. cit., p. 259

of Christ is not yet closed: we still live in the "now" of the New Testament, in the redemptive present. The time belongs to the realm of the historical, which means first that its opportunities are open to men, and second that it won't last forever. There will be a crisis, an event which will close off historic time and end the opportunity of the time of Christ.

This brings us to a consideration of two of the words used to refer to the end of history, the closing of time. "Eschaton" may refer to this present time of Christ as the last time of opportunity, but more specifically it means the events associated with the ending of this present time, described in the New Testament as the return of Christ, the last judgment, and the resurrection. Filson points out how some writers have wrongly identified eschatology with the larger discipline of teleology, and "have drained the word 'eschatology' of any reference to the future and used it to express in a timeless sense the ultimate issues of life."⁽¹⁾ It has, or should have, definite reference to the historical, chronological future and the specific events associated with the end. "Telos" means end as cessation, or as a final period, or in a larger sense as outcome. Again it is God who bestows the end: the end of this world will come with the eschaton, not just in the ordinary sequence of events but as a deliberate act of God. Niebuhr describes the two ends of man's history as finis, the end by reason of man's finiteness and mortality, and telos, the purpose and goal

(1) Floyd V. Filson, op. cit., p. 259

of his life and work. "All things in history move towards both fulfillment and dissolution, towards the fuller embodiment of their essential character and toward death. The problem is that the end as finis is a threat to the end as telos."⁽¹⁾ Only God can resolve this conflict, which He does in Christ not only by opening the door to man's completion or fulfillment but also by offering cleansing and forgiveness. "God uses history," says Whale,⁽²⁾ "to make His eternal and holy purposes of redemption actual."

Basic to most discussions of time in the Bible and particularly to any consideration of the kingdom of God in its relationship to history, is the concept of two aeons or ages, the present and that which is to come. The one is corrupted by the power of evil, and almost finished. The other is controlled by God and is ready to break in on this age and to be broken into by men of this age. Jesus' preaching is dominated by the sense of the nearness of this age to come. "Christians live both in this age and in that which is to come; . . . the new messianic age has been inaugurated in Christ, though it still awaits a consummation at the end of this present age."⁽³⁾ The large difficulty in working with the concept of the two ages is that they cannot be defined in spatial or in temporal terms, they do not exist one on top of the other nor do they follow one after the other; but there is almost no other language to describe them. Marsh would say that the distinction between the two ages does have some temporal aspects, "but is

(1) Reinhold Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 287

(2) John S. Whale, op. cit., p. 203

(3) John Marsh, op. cit., p. 265

more characteristically ethical or concrete. This world is an evil world, but the world to come is a world of eternal, of resurrection life. Yet it must be clearly understood that these two worlds do not stand in an order of temporal succession. The peculiarity of man's situation now is that, the kairos being upon him, he may at any point of this world's time step into the world to come and . . .⁽¹⁾ have eternal life as a present possession." The difference between the two worlds or ages is in their respective rulers and ultimate destinies. History, says Tillich, is "a battlefield of the divine and the demonic."⁽²⁾ The kingdom is the assertion that God will triumph.

The other major position on time which will be considered here is that of Oscar Cullman. We have already encountered Wilder's statement of the Jewish concept of history as a "U" proceeding from and to God. Cullman puts the same concept in terms of a rising straight line with God at its beginning and God at its end. This line he divides into three ages, although this does not make his position at this point essentially different from the concept of two ages referred to above: there is the age before creation, in which there is no measured time; there is the age between the creation and the parousia, which is this present age, arising in the purpose of God and ending when that purpose is accomplished; and there is the age after the parousia, beginning with the "final event" of this present age. The basic division from a human point

(1) John Marsh, op. cit., p. 267

(2) Paul Tillich, op. cit., p. 117

of view is of course between the second and third ages. These ages are made of different stuff, ruled by different kings, and while the second age has both a beginning and an end, the third has a beginning but no end. Along this line there is what Cullman calls "the centre of time", a point which is decisive for the showing forth of the ultimate victory and reign of God. In the Old Testament it is assumed that this middle point is the parousia associated with the eschaton or end of this age. But what for Cullman is fundamentally and radically new in the New Testament is the proclamation that this mid-point of time has come with the mission of Christ. Therefore the period immediately after this centre point, the last portion of the second age, already belongs to the final age. Cullman compares it to the decisive battle of a war, which may come some time before the war is declared to be won but which alters everything that comes after it. When Jesus announced the nearness of the kingdom of God, He was saying that men could now enter into this new sector of time, indeed that they had entered it whether they chose to recognize this or not. The sands of time would continue to run until they had run out, but life had already entered a new sphere where that kind of time did not exist.

This seems a helpful attempt to speak of the juxtaposition of "time" and "eternity", and other attempts come down to rather similar terms. Thus C. H. Dodd: "The kingdom of God in its full reality is not something which will happen after other things have

happened. It is that to which men awake when this order of time⁽¹⁾ and space no longer limits their vision." For Dodd of course the meaning of the eschaton is all there in the coming of Christ in history, except for the one element of sheer finality: history must have an end.

Tillich picks up Cullman's thought of Christ as the centre of history, who brings with Him the kairos, the right time which gives meaning to all the rest of time, "the fulfillment of the period of expectation or preparation and the beginning of the⁽²⁾ period of reception or fragmentary actualization". He discusses the extent to which the two ages can merge and the kingdom be realized in history, acknowledging that the growth of the church has some relationship to the realization of the kingdom but concluding that "the hope of any historical realization remains doubtful. The only unconditional prospect is the promise and ex-⁽³⁾pectation of the supra-historical fulfillment of history."

Niebuhr sees the history of this age as an interim between the first coming of Christ and the promised second coming. There is indeed a victory over evil in the first coming but it is not an ultimate victory. It gives the assurance of victory and it discloses the reign of God, but in the interim that reign is not actualized. "Sin is overcome in principle but not in fact. Love⁽⁴⁾ must continue to be suffering love rather than triumphant love."

(1) C. H. Dodd, The Parables of the Kingdom, p. 108

(2) Paul Tillich, op. cit., p. 119

(3) ibid., p. 141

(4) Reinhold Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 49

The interim is neither temporal nor spatial: the eschaton is near to history at every point, impinging on it, opening out from it. The sovereignty of God revealed at Christ's first coming will not be fully realized in a certain year of earth's history but with a certain relationship between man and God.

As good a summary as any of the many strands making up the time relationship of the kingdom of God is given by Ernest DeWitt Burton. Those with a particular position to maintain have chosen one or other of the strands for emphasis and would in some cases deny the validity of others; but in considering the synoptic gospels, he has found five parts to the answer to the question, "When and how does the kingdom of God enter the history of man?".

1. It comes as an already existing era. The gospel is new, but the reign of God is from everlasting to everlasting.
2. It comes progressively, growing from a small beginning to a great existence, spreading from one person to another.
3. It is near at hand: "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near." Because of this, the news about it is good news. The signs of the kingdom's nearness are all around men, and the signs of its consummation will also be plain.
4. The kingdom is a future kingdom and there are sayings of Jesus which give no indication of its nearness. The poor in spirit and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are blessed with the assurance of a kingdom which shall be. Burton feels that the

signs of the end and the parables of the last judgment must be given due weight in considering what Jesus taught about the kingdom.

5. The kingdom is ushered in at the coming of the Son of man. Here Burton turns again to the parables of the last judgment and of the wedding feast.

Clearly a good understanding of the Biblical concept of time is important to any attempt to relate the kingdom of God to the history of men, for at least part of our difficulty in defining this relationship arises from the distinctive Hebrew approach to the concept of time.

Chapter Six: The Place of the Church in the Various
Eschatological Schemes.

One of the areas of thought which is influenced, if not determined, by one's conclusions about the kingdom of God is his opinion of the church and its place in the world. It is not quite true to say that for each of the three main eschatological positions outlined there is a distinctive concept of the church; still the kingdom idea you start with does affect your thinking about the church.

The thorough-going eschatologist tends to discount the church as he discounts all that pertains to this passing world, and to see it as a temporary institution organized by men to fill the gap between apocalyptic prophecy and fulfillment. It was not in the intention of Jesus, but was the more or less spontaneous result of the delay of the end, as people came together in a common expectation and a common faith in Christ. "The church," said Barth, is the existential form of the kingdom of Christ in the interim between the ascension and His second coming, that is, an epoch in which He is no longer present with us in that mode wherein He was present to His disciples and apostles in the great forty days, nor is He yet so present as He will be in the manifested and so far
(1)
perfected glory of His kingdom."

At one end of the range of thought about the church, then, we find the early opinions of Rudolf Bultmann that the kingdom of

(1) Karl Barth, The Church and the Churches, p. 46

God is wholly supernatural and other-worldly, and that it calls men out of this world and separates them from it. It can in no sense be realized in human history, and the church considered as a human institution is therefore almost irrelevant to the reign of God. It is not for men to labour that the kingdom may come on earth; they must rather leave earth behind and enter the kingdom which God brings near.

It is possible to move from this position down a line of thinking in which the church is given an increasingly prominent position in the scheme of salvation. W. M. Horton concedes that "the early Christians saw in the church an earnest of a new order⁽¹⁾ which must be brought about by divine intervention." The community of believers foreshadows the kingdom and contains within it the seeds of the kingdom, but this is as much as can be said about it. More is said by Stauffer who sees in the life of the church that new condition for life which was created by Christ's coming and which will reach its climax and conclusion at the end of history. The church takes its place as a mediator of God's purpose in history, and it will cease to exist as such when that purpose is accomplished. This is as far as the thorough-going eschatologist can move in the place that he gives to the church. He may allow that God works in history, even that the kingdom does really come on earth in the church. But he must insist that here the church stands in opposition to the world and that it is the heaven-

(1) Walter Marshall Horton, "The Kingdom of God and the Church", p. 326 in Kepler (comp.), op. cit.

ly hope which is essential to New Testament thought. The church is a fellowship in which the hidden reign of God is manifest, and to a limited degree it is an instrument for extending the knowledge of God's reign; but the world itself is evil and the kingdom is yet to come.

Dodd, on the other hand, begins with the conviction that the kingdom has come, and sees the church as essential to its growth on earth. The church has been entrusted with the knowledge of the victory of God and with the powers to make that victory effective in the world. The church has already received, at least implicitly, all that is to be revealed at the End. The second coming cannot bring anything new qualitatively, but only a fuller quantitative pronouncement of God's reign as it exists in the church. So also T. W. Manson: "The kingship of God has its manifestation on earth in the existence of a people whose King He is.⁽¹⁾" The kingdom begins as a personal relationship between God and man, then grows until those who are in the kingdom form a society, the church. Once a person has begun to live in the reign of God, he becomes a member of the church, and the church continues as the sphere in which this personal relationship between God and man is acknowledged. Manson, however, would not leave any doubt about the relative importance of the church in the kingdom: "It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the society is not the kingdom but only a manifestation or product of it; and that membership of the

(1) T. W. Manson, The Teaching of Jesus, p. 171

society is not entrance to the kingdom but only a result of entrance.⁽¹⁾ Dodd would probably have agreed with this, but his concern was more to demonstrate that those who acknowledged the reign of God and so became members of the church enjoyed not just a foretaste but the fulness of the kingdom life. He traces the development of Paul's thought about the church and observes that Paul found the church to be the possessor of a new quality of life, so filled with the Holy Spirit that he was forced to conclude that the church was the true Israel of God in its "final eschatological manifestation". As this conclusion was brought home to him, Paul swung away from looking for the return of Christ and the coming of the kingdom in its fulness, to a realization of the fulness of the kingdom as it already existed in the church. Paul consistently retains his hope of glory yet to come as a background to his thought, but because he now saw the kingdom present in Christ and Christ present in the church, he put more and more emphasis on the riches of divine grace already possessed by the church.

Interestingly enough, the most complete development of thought about the church in its relationship to the kingdom comes in the writings of those who hold the intermediate position, that the kingdom is in some sense present and in some sense is yet to come. Perhaps the best summation is given by J. R. Nelson who finds at least general agreement among Protestant theologians that "the church is not the completed kingdom of God . . . (but) comes be-

(1) T. W. Manson, op. cit., p. 234

tween Christ and the fulfilled kingdom of God, not as a chasm but as a living link. The church lives in a state of crisis and tension between the time of promise and the time of final consum-
 (1)
 mation." This statement is middle-of-the-road enough to be acceptable to holders of either of the extremes of position on the kingdom, but its intention is to hold together the thought that the kingdom has come in power and the thought that there will be a full and final manifestation of the reign of God over the creation. In general, this middle position allows a greater prominence to the origin and function of the church in the world. The church is seen as an essential instrument of the will of God, called into being when the mission of Christ brought the kingdom into the world. The church "claims to live in the coming kingdom
 (2)
 of God as a present fact." The kingdom, indeed, "does not exist
 (3)
 apart from His people." "Jesus' announcement that the kingdom of God was at hand is chronologically and inseparably linked with
 (4)
 the gathering of a group of disciples." Further, the group of disciples, the people of God, are those who will recognize the kingdom "when it comes" because they know it as it has already come. Christ will not return as a stranger to the Christian, even though His coming will mean a fuller manifestation of Himself than is at present possible.

This relationship between church and kingdom is well stated

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- (1) J. Robert Nelson, The Realm of Redemption, p. 234
 (2) Walter Marshall Horton, op. cit., p. 192
 (3) H. D. Wendland in Wood et al, op. cit., p. 146
 (4) Eugene Lyman in Wood et al, op. cit., p. 93

by Paul Minear: "From every standpoint the kingdom of God retained its essential priority over the human community", which must always be seen "within the context of God's kingdom, within the horizons of the new age and the new world. . . . There are places where a New Testament writer appears to identify the church and the kingdom, and other places where distinctions are drawn between the two."⁽¹⁾ The kingdom comes first, in time and importance; the church exists as a result of the kingdom's coming, as a means to the fuller realization of the kingdom among men, and until the kingdom comes in its fulness. So also Gustaf Aulen: "The church exists on the border between two worlds. . . . As members of the church, Christians live in two worlds. . . . This duality will last until the New Age is fulfilled in glory."⁽²⁾ C. T. Craig points out, almost in line with Dodd, that the early church was marked by the possession of the Holy Spirit, and because the gift of the Spirit had been promised for the end time, the disciples believed that this time had already come. "Believers lived in anticipation of the completion of God's reign. There was continuity between the church on earth and the new age of God, but these were not the same."⁽³⁾

Though there is no one who would fully identify the kingdom with the church, there are some scholars for whom the distinction is a very fine one. Sherman Johnson would use the term "family of

(1) Paul S. Minear, Images of the Church in the New Testament, p. 124

(2) Gustaf Aulen, "The Church in the Light of the New Testament," pp. 19f

(3) Clarence T. Craig, The Church of the New Testament, p. 37

God" as equivalent to "kingdom of God" because the term "kingdom . . . describes a family relationship and the making of God's will effective."⁽¹⁾ And John Oman writes, "Jesus founded His church . . . as the society of the kingdom of God, . . . the society of those who already realize the blessings of the kingdom of God in their hearts - pardon, grace, joy - and are so sure that it will come in fulness that they can live as if it actually were come."⁽²⁾

It is possible, then, to relate a particular belief about the church to the eschatological position in which it exists. The thorough-going eschatologist gives almost no place to the church, for the kingdom is come only in the eyes of God and it will at last break in on this world only to destroy it, never to reform or transform it. Men have a new relationship with God by reason of the dawning of the kingdom, but they do not live in a new world; and if they have formed what they are pleased to call a church, that is their own business and will not make any difference to the eschaton when it comes. From the position of realized or inaugurated eschatology we find developing a view of the church as the possessor of all those aspects of the eschaton which were fulfilled in the coming of Jesus, a belief that the power of God is now at work in the world through the church, and the conviction that the kingdom grows, and the church with it, as the recognition of God's sovereignty grows. The intermediate eschatological position tends to elaborate this latter view.

(1) Sherman E. Johnson, Jesus In His Homeland, p. 37

(2) John Oman, "The Church", p. 619 in Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Volume III.

Chapter Seven: What Is The Church? Some Conclusions.

"The church in the New Testament is never triumphant, always militant. The church triumphant would be identical with the kingdom of God, and therefore no longer ecclesia.⁽¹⁾" The church as ecclesia is the assembly of believers, the gathering of those who have heard and responded to the call to discipleship. Fuller's statement, quoted above, would seem to end any discussion of the relationship of the church to the kingdom.

Nevertheless there has been a long series of attempts to identify the kingdom with the group of disciples, or to see it as realized in them. We have those like Windisch and Haupt who point out that one meaning of the kingdom of God is communion or fellowship with God, and certainly in this sense the church is the kingdom insofar as she claims the Holy Spirit. We have the view of Adolph Schlatter that the kingdom of God "is men with whom God deals in a kingly manner. His church is the kingdom of God insofar as it is constituted of His sons and servants. Through the community which Christ gathers together the dominion of God becomes visible."⁽²⁾ John Bright asserts that "the members of Christ's kingdom⁽³⁾ are those who obey Him." Christ calls men to a radical decision for or against the reign of God in their midst. "And those who heed it have entered the kingdom, nay, are the kingdom. . . . Christ⁽⁴⁾ addressed Himself to the hearts of individual men." Dibelius has

(1) Reginald H. Fuller, "Church", p. 49 in Alan Richardson (ed.), op. cit.

(2) quoted by Gosta Lundstrom in The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus, p. 130

(3) John Bright, The Kingdom of God, p. 221

(4) ibid., p. 220

described the group of disciples as forming "the kernel community of the future people of God".

These and others would emphasize to the fullest possible extent those aspects of the kingdom which are (more or less evidently) realized in the church. They build on the basis that the kingdom has come in the person and words and deeds of Jesus. They see the church as coming into being either in Jesus' initial calling of disciples, or in Peter's realization that Jesus is the Christ, or by the express founding of Jesus at the Last Supper. They take Dodd's basic position that the kingdom was present in power in Christ, and Christ is present in power in His church, and so the kingdom is operative in the church.

Certainly if the kingdom is thought of in inward, personal terms, and if we can say that the kingdom really comes to the man who recognizes the reign of God, believes in it, accepts it, then the church and the kingdom are pretty well contiguous: as the church grows so does the kingdom. Yet such a simplification clearly ignores a lot of hard fact about the kingdom. Even Adolph Schlatter, who probably goes as far as anyone in identifying the church and the kingdom, adds to the statement quoted above, "But the group of disciples is not the same as the kingdom of God, for the disciple can fall." All the attempts to confine the kingdom within the church are defeated very simply by the prayer, "Thy kingdom come"; and we are forced to take some such position as Manson, whose basic position on the kingdom might be expected to

(1)
lead him to a much closer identification of church and kingdom,
but who still sees the community as a manifestation and product
of the kingdom. Lundstrom too, after close consideration of all
the long history of eschatological debate, concludes that the
kingdom is not a community of Christians, nor an inner life of
the soul, nor yet an earthly paradise which men can make. It is
absolutely eschatological. "What is new about Jesus is that He
preached the purely eschatological kingdom which is to come in
(2)
the future as being already present."

Seemingly all of the studies of the church in the kingdom
end with a vague and confusing statement such as this. No doubt
the conclusions mean more to their authors than to the reader;
but the attempt to define the relationship in few words or many
seems limited to partial success at best. For here we are forced
to deal in terms of space and time with concepts which essential-
ly have no relation to time and space. The language has no dimen-
sion to talk about the eternal reign of God, as the eye has no
capacity to see it. However, since this was a problem which con-
fronted Jesus far more urgently than it ever confronted Dodd and
Schweitzer, it may be worthwhile to consider again the "kingdom
sayings" of Jesus in the synoptic gospels with a view to discern-
ing the relationship of the church, the ecclesia, to the kingdom.
Specifically I propose to look at the six characteristics of the

(1) Manson, for example, says that the prayer "Thy will be done"
is a paraphrase of "Thy kingdom come", and is certainly per-
fectly fulfilled in the life of Jesus.

(2) Gosta Lundstrom, op. cit., p. 228

(1)

kingdom already enumerated, with a thought as to the sense in which they are also characteristics of the church.

The kingdom centres in the person of Jesus, and is operative in His personal victories over the powers of evil. We have seen already that this is the key thought in the attempt to identify the church with the kingdom: Christ takes the powers of the kingdom as His own, and releases them in and through the church.

The kingdom brings with it a call to a new life, and sets up a basic conflict with the old life and with the world. We cannot but be reminded of Jesus' warnings to His followers that they were setting themselves in opposition to the world, that they would encounter tribulation and family dissent, and that they would find the seal of their loyalty to Him in the persecution which they met. The church can certainly be seen as the ground on which the battle between the kingdom power and the power of evil is fought; and what is said about the kingdom on this account may be said equally of the church.

The kingdom demands total loyalty, and it may be said that if this loyalty is given to the church, the demand is met. This again is related to the fact that Christ is the Head of the church as He is the King of the kingdom. "Not everyone that says to me, 'Lord, Lord', shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Those who live under the reign of God "shall enter" the kingdom; Lundstrom is one who

(1) See pp. 32 - 36

would warn us against saying that they have entered it. To those who repent and believe, "the kingdom of God is at hand". Here then is a characteristic of the kingdom which is also a characteristic of the church, but which does not give a basis for saying, "The church is the kingdom". To the scribe who answered well the question about the two great commandments, Jesus said, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." ⁽¹⁾ Obedience to these commandments was the short step that separated him from it; and obedience to these commandments is an essential mark of a church member.

There is power associated with the kingdom, the power of healing and the power of growth. Here we may consider Jesus' promise to the disciples, "The works that I do you shall do also, and greater works than these shall you do." ⁽²⁾ He specifically gives the power of the kingdom into the hands of His followers. At the beginning of His ministry He proclaimed the characteristics of the kingdom in the words of the prophet: "He has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." ⁽³⁾ The church has taken this statement of mission as her charter, and it is surely one of those places where the closest possible connection exists between church and kingdom. In the heat of a controversy with the Pharisees over the

(1) Mark 12: 34

(2) John 14: 12

(3) Luke 4: 18 - 21

source of His healing power, Jesus declared, "If I by the Spirit
(1)
cast out demons, then is the kingdom come upon you." The church
has claimed and used this power and authority, in obedience to
her Lord. The kingdom is operative in the words and deed of the
community.

The kingdom is to be proclaimed and shown forth to the world.
Here we may say there is no relationship between church and king-
dom, for the church is not to exalt herself in this manner but is
to find her life in losing it. This is a characteristic of the
kingdom which definitely sets it above the church and would seem
to indicate its greater and more abiding nature. The church is
functional, called into being for a task entrusted to her; the
kingdom is eternal, being really a characteristic of God.

The kingdom is related to a coming, climactic event. Here is
the last inescapable characteristic which forces the conclusion
that the kingdom exists above and beyond the church, that the
church exists within and under the kingdom. We may still wonder
what to do with Jesus' assertion, "Some of them here that stand
by shall in no wise taste of death till they see the kingdom of
(2)
God come with power." But this remains true of every attempt to
systematize Jesus' eschatological outlook: there are always loose
ends, there is no pat formula. So it is fitting to end with a
six-headed conclusion, the position on the relationship of the
kingdom of God and the church of the Roman Catholic exegetist,

(1) Matthew 12: 28

(2) Mark 9: 1

Rudolf Schnackenburg:

1. The kingdom and Jesus' earthly community are not identical, but they are related. The community shares, through Christ, in the present saving power of the kingdom and in the promise for the future.
2. The congregation will some day become the community of the perfected kingdom. The ecclesia is the community of those in expectation of the kingdom of God.
3. The powers of the kingdom which is present are active in the community just as they were in the teaching and acts of Jesus.
4. The community will endure until God reveals the cosmic kingdom. It exists in constant struggle against evil.
5. Membership in the ecclesia on earth is no guarantee of belonging to the coming kingdom.
6. The people of God is still being gathered together. That is, the consummation of the kingdom is future. Nevertheless, the people of God is a people over whom God rules. That is, the kingdom⁽¹⁾ is really present.

The church is not the kingdom, but it looks very much like it. Jesus' clear vision of the precise relationship between the two is expressed in thought-forms so foreign to us that we cannot agree on what it was He saw. Perhaps after all the best statement is the one that seems most hopelessly archaic in its language:

(1) quoted by Gosta Lundstrom, op. cit., pp. 277f

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. . . . When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subjected to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be everything to everyone. (1)

What is the kingdom which He shall deliver to the Father but the church, the kingdom within the kingdom? Christ will reign, and the church will be the sphere of that reign, until God has put all things in subjection to Him. Then when the purpose of God shall have been accomplished and the will of God shall be done, the church will change into the kingdom. But it will not be much of a change.

(1) I Corinthians 15: 22 - 28

Appendix

A selection of the "kingdom sayings" of Jesus from the first three gospels, commonly accepted as authentic:

1. Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, saying, "The kingdom of God has drawn near; repent ye." (Mark 1: 14, 15)

2. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. . . . Today has this scripture which you have heard been fulfilled." (Luke 4: 18 - 21)

3. And He appointed twelve that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach and to have authority to cast out demons. (Mark 3: 14)

4. "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." (Luke 6: 20)

5. "For I say to you that unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5: 20)

6. "The kingdom come." (Matthew 6: 10)

7. "Seek first His kingdom and its righteousness." (Matthew 6: 33)

8. "Not everyone that says to me, 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 7: 21)

9. "Many shall come from the east and from the west and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven: but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 8: 11, 12. Context disputed)

10. "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." (Matthew 11: 13) "The law and the prophets were until John; from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man enters violently into it." (Luke 16: 16)

11. But when the Pharisees heard (of His healing) they said, "This man does not cast out demons but by Beelzebub, the prince of demons." And knowing their thoughts He said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then shall his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? But if I by the Spirit ("finger" in Luke) cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." (Matthew 12: 24 - 28)
12. "As Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so shall the Son of man be to this generation." (Luke 11: 30)
13. "So is the kingdom of God as if a man should cast seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow he knows not how." (Mark 4: 26, 27)
14. "It is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew and became a tree." (Luke 13: 19)
15. " . . . like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened." (Matthew 13: 33)
16. "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field; which a man found and hid; and in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." (Matthew 13: 44)
17. "The kingdom of heaven is like a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls; and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it." (Matthew 13: 45, 46)
18. "The kingdom of heaven is like a drag-net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which when it was filled they drew up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away." (Matthew 13: 47, 48)
19. "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city" (which would not receive the teaching of the disciples). (Matthew 10: 15)
20. "There are some of them here that stand by who shall in no wise taste of death till they see the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9: 1)
21. "Whoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18: 4) "Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child does shall not enter therein." (Mark 10: 15)

22. "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened to a certain king who would make a reckoning with his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought to him that owed him ten thousand talents. (He was forgiven, as he was unable to pay; but he refused to forgive a fellow servant a much smaller debt.) . . . And his lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due." (Matthew 18: 23 - 25)

23. "Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God." (Luke 9: 60)

24. "The harvest indeed is plenteous but the labourers are few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that he send forth labourers into the harvest." (Luke 10: 2)

25. "Heal the sick . . . and say to them, 'The kingdom of God is come nigh.' But into whatever city you enter and they receive you not, go out into the streets thereof and say, 'Even the dust from your city that cleaves to our feet we wipe off against you: nevertheless, know this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh.' I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city." (Luke 10: 9 - 12)

26. "No one can enter into the house of a strong man and spoil his goods except he first bind the strong man." (Mark 3: 27)

27. "Be you also ready: for in an hour that you think not, the Son of man comes." (Luke 12: 40) "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12: 49, 50) "You hypocrites, you know how to interpret the face of the heaven; but how is it that you do not know how to interpret this time?" (Luke 12: 56)

28. "Go tellnthat fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow. . . . Nevertheless I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.'" (Luke 13: 32, 33)

29. "Whoever will seek to gain his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life will preserve it." (Luke 17: 25)

30. "Suffer the little children to come to me; forbid them not: for to such belongs the kingdom of God." (Mark 10: 14)

31. There came James and John, saying, "Grant to us that we may sit one on thy right hand and one on thy left hand in thy glory." (He said) . . . "But to sit on my right hand or on my left hand is not mine to give; but it is for them for whom it has been prepared." (Mark 10: 37, 40)

32. A certain nobleman "called ten servants of his and gave them ten pounds and said, 'Trade herewith until I come.' . . . (When he returned) he commanded those servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading. And the first came before him saying, 'Lord, thy pound has made ten pounds more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, you good servant: because you were found faithful in very little, (be entrusted with much).' . . . And the other came saying, 'Lord, behold, here is your pound which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared you because you are an austere man: you take up that which you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.' He said to him, 'Out of your own mouth will I judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I am an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping what I did not sow; then why did you not give my money into the bank, and I at my coming should have required it with interest?' And he said to them that stood by, 'Take away from him the pound that he has, and give it to him that has the ten pounds.' . . . I say to you, that unto everyone that has shall be given, but from him that has not, even that which he has shall be taken away." (Luke 19: 11 - 27)

33. "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. . . . But his citizens hated him and sent an ambassage after him saying, 'We will not have this man reign over us.' And it came to pass, when he was come back again, having received the kingdom, that . . . (he divided his rule among his loyal subjects, ten cities to one and five to another, and said) . . . 'But these my enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.'" (Luke 19: 11 - 27, selected)

34. (The people) that went before and they that followed cried, "Hosanna! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom that comes, the kingdom of our father David." (Mark 11: 9, 10)

35. "The kingdom of heaven is likened to a certain king who made a marriage feast for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the marriage feast: and they would not come. . . . Then said he to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but they that were bidden are not worthy; go therefore to the partings of the highways and as many as you shall find, bid to the marriage feast.' And those servants went out into the highways and gathered together as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was filled with guests." (Matthew 22: 1 - 11)

36. "A king came in to behold his wedding guests and saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend,

how came you in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to his servants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him out.' . . . For many are called but few are chosen." (Luke 22: 12 - 14)

37. "When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven." (Mark 12: 25)

38. (To the scribe who answered well the question about the two great commandments) "You are not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12: 34)

39. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men." (Matthew 23: 13)

40. "Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that the summer is near. Even so when you see these (?) things coming to pass, know that he (or the kingdom of God) is near, even at the doors. This generation shall not pass away until all these things are accomplished. But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father. Take heed, watch and pray, for you do not know when the time is." (Mark 13: 28 - 33)

41. "Verily I say to you, I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." (Mark 14: 25)(or, in Matthew, that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of God; or, in Luke, until the kingdom of God shall come.)

42. "I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me." (Luke 22: 29)

43. The high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God that you tell us whether you are Messiah, the Son of David." Jesus said to him, "You have said. Nevertheless I say to you, Henceforth you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matthew 26: 63, 64)

44. "But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God." (Luke 22: 69)

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